

Community FAQ - COVID 19 (From The Frisch School)

Frequently Asked Questions 3/15/2020

Background: The covid 19 epidemic requires that certain decisions be made with inadequate information. A series of questions have been posed to me for which I provide answers that may in the near future require revision, but will provide reasonable guidance in the short term. I will try to provide the explanation for the decision, as well as the decision itself. Subsequent guidance by State or Federal Health Authorities should take precedence over any recommendations I make at this time.

Question #1: If I have covid 19, how long should I be in self-imposed quarantine?

Answer #1: The answer to this is unknown. Viral shedding continues at its highest during the acute phase and reduces after the first few days, but continues for an indeterminate period. Some studies have found traces of virus many days out, but the viability of this potential “genetic debris” is unclear. Since we do not have the availability of testing for “cure,” a rule of thumb until something better comes along is to **wait until you are completely asymptomatic (no fever, cough, or aches....)**. Then add **48 hours allowing yourself to return to the community on the third morning after you are completely asymptomatic.**

Question #2: I am in self quarantine with a family member who is covid positive what should I do?

Answer #2: You must stay in self-imposed quarantine until enough time has elapsed to declare you free of disease. As the incubation period is 0-14 days, this would mean 14 days from the last day of symptoms in your family member. Note this is not from the day of symptom onset, but from the last day the symptoms in the family member.

Question #3: I am in a house with a member of the family who has symptoms that may be consistent with covid 19 but not yet tested what should I do?

Answer #3: Keep in mind that the infection is mostly spread by droplet and by prolonged contact within 3-6 feet. Have the patient further self-isolate in your house, if possible minimizing direct contact. Have the patient eat off paper plates and dispose of them. Alternatively, have the patient wash his/her own dishes separate from the family and have all surfaces he/she has contact with cleaned with an approved cleaning solution. A 1:50 solution of chlorine bleach to water should be effective in cleaning surfaces and reasonably cheaper than clorox towelettes. This solution is for surface cleaning only, not for handwashing.

Question #4: I am in close prolonged contact with a parent of a child who has tested positive for covid 19. What is my risk?

Answer #4: The parent can be asymptomatic and infectious for up to two days before becoming symptomatic. If the parent is asymptomatic and your exposure was more than two days before, there is little likelihood of infection. If the parent is observed without symptoms for two days after your last exposure to him, you are in the clear. If the parent develops symptoms within two days of your exposure, you need to consider yourself exposed, and put yourself in self-imposed quarantine for 14 days.

Question #5: If I am in self-quarantine, can I go out of the house to walk the dog?

Answer #5: Walk the dog in your backyard

Question #6: Can I go to a house minyan with only 10 people if I am in self-quarantine?

Answer #6: No

Question #7: Why do we allow parents of self-quarantined children out of the house?

Answer #7: Parents of children who self-quarantine, but who are not infectious (and for this purpose infectious means have a positive covid test, or have symptoms consistent with covid 19) need to leave house for critical needs such as shopping, gas. Even when they go outside the house, they are engaging in social-distancing, as much as possible minimizing large group participation in the workplace. Meetings at hospitals are now being scaled down in number of people present and often replaced with virtual meetings. We cannot obtain perfection and continue to function as a society.

Question #8: Why are we tracking symptoms in the entire day school population?

Answer #8: When we ultimately have testing for covid 19, we will see an explosion of cases in the newspaper and we will not know whether we have had any impact. By creating a case definition of viral illness by symptoms going back to March 6th, we will be able to use different case definitions (based on different symptom clusters) and see whether the disease process is remitting or worsening. We may also get some insight in what sub community, age group, gender is failing in a way the laboratory based state statistics will not reveal. This sort of information is only collectable in real time.

Question #9: What are the guidelines from the Israeli Ministry of Health for Israelis returning from overseas for 14 days of isolation.

Answer #9: Here are the guidelines for home isolation recommended by the Israeli Ministry of Health for ALL Israelis returning from overseas for 14 days. I just received this from an Israeli colleague who is in home isolation now.

Guidance for the person under isolation:

- Stay indoors;
- Stay in a separate, well-ventilated room with a closed door. Exit the room if necessary, for very short periods only, cover your mouth and nose with a facemask. Several individuals of the same household can be isolated in the same room. If all household members require isolation, there is no restriction within the home;
- Wash hands with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based sanitizer before and after food preparation, before eating, and before and after using the toilet;
- Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty. It is preferable to use disposable paper for hand drying;
- If available, use a separate bathroom;
- Keep mouth and nose covered while sneezing or coughing, cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue or sleeve. This is to prevent the virus from spreading. Immediately afterwards, wash hands with soap and water or disinfect them with alcohol-based sanitizer;
- If breastfeeding, wash hands before touching the infant, wear a face mask or any other cloth while feeding at the breast. If expressing breast milk with a breast pump, wash hands before touching any pump or bottle parts, and if possible, consider having someone who is well to feed breast milk to the infant;
- If fever or respiratory symptoms develop, or any other medical condition, call the 101 MDA Emergency Services Hotline.

General guidance:

- There should be only one person who enters and exits the room of the isolated person; this person should be a healthy person with no other diseases which might further increase their risk;
- No home visitors are allowed;
- Check that the common areas in the home such as the kitchen and the bathroom are well-ventilated;
- Upon entering the isolation space, cover your mouth and nose, preferably with a face mask, cloth is also possible. Do not touch face mask while wearing it;
- Use disposable products such as gloves when exposed to the isolated person and the home isolation space, including dirty surfaces, clothes or beddings;
- Avoid direct contact with body fluids, especially oral secretions, airway secretions, urine and feces of the isolated person;
- Wash hands with soap and water or disinfect them with appropriate alcohol-based sanitizer after every contact with the isolated person, the person's belongings, or immediate environment, before eating, and after using the toilet. There is a preference to wash with soap and water over sanitizer if the hands have visible dirt;
- Surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day, such as handles, light switches, toilets and showers, bedside tables, bed frame and other furniture in the

suspected patient room, with standard household disinfectant (soap or alcohol based- at least 70%). If possible, clean with 1000 ml of chlorine solution (eg "bleach" containing sodium chlorite - take 40 ml bleach and dilute in 1 liter of water) until the surfaces / items are dried. Gloves and a gown or apron should be used during the cleaning processes;

- Bed linen and laundry must be changed at least twice a week. All laundry of the isolated person must be stored separately in the isolation room until the time of washing. Care should be taken to avoid dirty laundry from coming into contact with other items, including clean laundry. Washing must be done separately, on a washing program of at least 65 ° C with regular laundry soap;
- Disposable products such as gloves, tissues, masks and other waste associated with the care of the isolated person must be disposed of in a dedicated bag in the patient's room and sealed tightly before being disposed of in an external garbage can;
- Avoid the sharing of common objects that could transmit the virus with the isolated person, such as: toothbrush, cigarettes, dishes and utensils, towels, beddings, etc. You can wash dishes and utensils with water and dish soap; and
- It is best to do dishes in a dishwasher with a temperature of at least 65 ° C. If no dishwasher is available, dishes can be washed in hot water and dish soap and to ensure they fully dry in the drying rack. The utensils (plates, cups, cutlery and trays) of the people in isolation will be separate from those of other occupants, or they should use disposable utensils.
- All other household members must wash hands frequently.
- Practice strict hygiene.

Question #10: Are there any guidelines with regards to Pets and their care by covid 19 infected owners in self isolation?

Answer 10: see CDC Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/interim-guidance-managing-people-in-home-care-and-isolation-who-have-pets.html>

Question #11: Where can I find updated national guidelines on Covid 19?

Answer: The Center for Disease Control has an FAQ at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>